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Nationalist China - USSR: A high Nationalist Chinese Foreign Ministry official has acknowledged that controversy exists within his government on the question of establishing contacts with the Soviet Union.

In a conversation with US Embassy officials on 24 April, Vice Foreign Minister H. K. Yang deplored the publicity that the visit to Taiwan last October by Soviet journalist Viktor Louis received in the world press. He said Louis would not be allowed to make another visit.

Yang expressed the view that Moscow was not interested in improving relations with the Nationalist government but only in using these contacts to further the Soviets' anti-Mao campaign. Yang discounted the significance of Soviet conversations with Nationalist Chinese representatives abroad and professed doubt that the USSR would shift its position on the Chinese representation issue in the UN in any way that would be advantageous to Taiwan.

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Yang apparently was acting under instructions from the top leadership to reassure the US that recent contacts with the Soviets did not represent a major policy shift by Taipei. In line with this, Taipei will probably discourage future contacts that attract publicity, such as the Louis visit.

The generally negative views expressed by Yang on contacts with the USSR have been voiced recently within some government and party circles, but the extent of this sentiment is not yet clear. At the recent Kuomintang party congress some opposition was

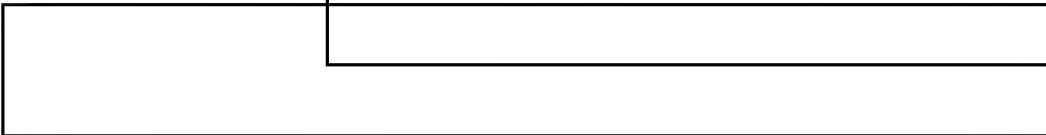
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expressed to a leadership-sponsored resolution that implicitly endorsed steps to improve relations with the USSR and other Communist governments as part of a strategy for isolating Maoist China.

Whatever the extent of the criticism, President Chiang Kai-shek, as the virtually exclusive source of policy decisions of this importance, is unlikely to be deterred from continuing or expanding contacts with the USSR.

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Guatemala - British Honduras: Guatemala is pressing for secret talks with British Honduran Premier Price in an effort to persuade him to delay any movement toward independence.

Price has repeatedly said that he wants to achieve independence before 1970, and has indicated that he would call for a constitutional conference after the Belize City municipal elections on 30 April. The Guatemalans, however, hope to persuade him to wait until progress is made in their negotiations with Britain over the future of the colony.

Guatemala has a century-old claim to British Honduras. At present, the Guatemalan negotiators are primarily seeking some arrangement that will give their government influence over British Honduran foreign and defense policies. Nonetheless, the old claim remains a live question in Guatemalan politics. To have the British Hondurans move openly toward independence before Guatemala can reach agreement with Britain would drop a very emotional, nationalistic issue into Guatemala's own current presidential campaign. By the same token, this move would make it more difficult for Guatemala to reach a compromise agreement with the UK.

The Guatemalan Foreign Ministry has strongly urged the US to help arrange a meeting with Price and has also requested US assistance in securing a resumption of talks with Britain.

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